

Letter from Samuel P. Langley to Alexander Graham Bell, April 18, 1899

Personal SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION. *Washington. U.S.A.* April 18, 1899 Dear Mr. Bell:

I have been inquiring yesterday and to-day , how far I could carry into effect your wish to make some return to the Japanese Gardens for the mandarin ducks sent by you, and I think there will be no difficulty in my sending as many as half a dozen raccoons, properly caged, to San Francisco, paying their fare and passage to that point, at any rate, and perhaps to Yokohama or even to Tokyo. 2 It would certainly be better if they went by the vessel on which your Mr. Ostenheimer goes, and possibly he or some other person, might assume some responsibility for their care during the voyage and for their actual delivery at Tokyo.

Perhaps, by the by, you would like to have some official mention made of this to the Japanese Minister, since the destination of the animals is, I understand, a Japanese Government institution. Meeting him last night , I mentioned it to him informally.

Passing now to quite another matter, I may say that I wrote to Professor Pickering about your suggestion 3 suggestion for the employment of kites in connection with wireless telegraphy, and I received the inclosed letter from him, which please be good enough to return to me. The kite part of the plan would probably be carried out at the Blue Hill Observatory, which is a kind of succursale of that at Cambridge. Its Director, whom you have already met, is A. Lawrence Rotch, Esq., and he is now in town for two or three days attending the meetings of the Academy, though he is not himself, I think, an Academician. I dare say he would be glad to stop a day longer, if you would care to talk to him about the matter. His address here is the 4 Cosmos Club.

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Very truly yours, S P Langley Doctor A. Graham Bell, 1331 Connecticut Avenue,
Washington, D.C.